

mission assigned is without question. We cannot take lightly their meritorious service to our Nation. Nor, can we ever forget their admirable and routinely valiant actions both individually and collectively. They were not only pivotal to a successful combat effort, but to establishing and maintaining the legacy for which the 3rd Reconnaissance Battalion may be justifiably proud.

I join in expressing the respect, admiration, and grateful appreciation of our nation as members of the 3rd Reconnaissance Battalion Association gather for their reunion next month in Arlington, VA.●

FDA CONSOLIDATION AT WHITE OAK

● Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I rise today to urge my colleagues to continue to work for full funding of the Food and Drug Administration, FDA, consolidation and improvement at White Oak, MD in fiscal year 2003. I strongly believe that ensuring the safety of America's food and drug supply is a matter of national security. Yesterday, Senator HATCH and I offered then withdrew an amendment that we hoped would have provided the funding needed for this project which is vital to ensure the safety of America's food and drug supply. We are told that the our amendment would have increased the cost of the homeland security supplemental appropriations bill. However, we have been assured that Senators DORGAN and CAMPBELL, the chair and ranking members of the Treasury General Government Appropriations Subcommittee, are committed to looking at trying to help to continue to find a way to fund the FDA consolidation at White Oak as a part of the fiscal year 2003 appropriations process.

Why is completing this project vital? FDA's mission is to review and regulate more than \$1 trillion worth of products, many of which are vital to human health. FDA cannot fulfill its mission because FDA has to work in obsolete facilities that are not equipped to handle today's advanced laboratory and administrative functions. Currently, over 6,000 FDA employees are scattered among 40 different buildings at 20 different locations in the Greater Washington, D.C. area. These facilities are being consolidated into one integrated facility at the former U.S. Naval Surface Weapons Center. Not only will the consolidation greatly improve FDA's operating efficiencies, but timely construction of the new facilities also will save approximately \$32 million per year in commercial lease costs. We need consolidate FDA on one campus, just like the NIH and the CDC, in order for the FDA to take its place alongside these institutions as a world class health and food research and safety facility.

What is FDA's role in national security? The recent anthrax attacks on U.S. citizens have heightened FDA's

critical role in ensuring the safety of our food and drug supplies. Indeed, the FDA is on the front lines of this effort and must have proper, modern facilities to enable them to best perform their mission. The consolidation will provide state-of-the-art laboratories and facilities for that mission.

What is the status of the project? Congress has already appropriated \$146 million for the first phases of this vital project, fiscal year 2000, \$35 million; fiscal year 2001, \$92.1 million; fiscal year 2002, \$19.06 million. Construction has started on phase I, the laboratory for FDA's Center for Drug Evaluation and Research. However, approximately \$450 million is still needed to complete this vital project.

Why is full funding important? This project has already been delayed due to funding cutbacks. If the General Services Administration's fiscal year 2003 construction request for FDA consolidations is not fully funded, completion of the consolidation will be delayed even further. These delays will add considerably to the overall cost of the project due to inflation and other factors. For example, scheduled to be constructed in phase III is the Center for Devices and Radiological Health, CDRH. The CDRH laboratories are badly in need of improvements, but FDA has been holding off such work in anticipation of building new laboratories as part of the consolidation. Further delay, we are advised, would likely necessitate FDA's spending several million dollars renovating the existing CDRH laboratories. These would be non-recoverable costs.

What is the next step? We hope that your colleagues will agree that, from the perspectives of public safety and fiscal responsibility, we can not afford to delay the timely completion of this project. We hope that our colleagues will support full funding for FDA consolidation in fiscal year 2003. I look forward to continuing to work with my colleagues, Senators HATCH, DORGAN, and CAMPBELL toward completing this project which will provide better security of two of the most essential daily needs of all Americans, our food and drugs.●

TRIBUTE TO JIM MAYER

● Mr. CLELAND. Mr. President, today I pay tribute to a man whose leadership is only surpassed in value to me by his friendship. Twenty-five years ago, Mr. Jim Mayer played an important role in the creation of an innovative pilot program called "Leadership VA."

The program is designed to identify 70 leaders in the Department of Veterans Affairs each year, and to provide an enrichment of their career development through an intense leadership training experience. In its 25 years of existence, Leadership VA has laid a foundation for a network of VA leaders who share a deep commitment to the Department of Veterans Affairs and to

public service in its broadest sense. Today, 63 percent of all Central Office Senior Executive Service members have completed the program, as have 73 percent of all field leaders.

This success, though, did not happen by chance. Rather, it is a tribute to the hard work and forward thinking of Jim Mayer. Jim began his VA career as Special Assistant for Vietnam Veterans Affairs to Administrator Richard L. Roudebush in 1974, six years after beginning his service in the U.S. Army as an infantry man in the 25th Division in Vietnam.

Jim joined the Leadership VA staff as its Executive Director in April of 1998, but his relationship with LVA goes back to his time on the first Selection Committee in 1978.

Throughout his years at the VA, Jim has spent countless hours working on behalf of veterans, striving to better conditions by improving the VA from within, but his accomplishments are not limited to his time at the VA. He is a recipient of numerous awards including: 1977, VA Meritorious Service; 1981, VA Exceptional Service; 1991, Secretary of Veterans Affairs Outstanding Volunteer; and, 1993, George Washington Honor Medal from the Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge for work as a volunteer with Desert Shield/Desert Storm injured at Walter Reed Army Medical Center.

For as long as I have known him, Jim Mayer has exemplified the term "public servant." He is a selfless individual who has always thought of his country before thinking about himself. In this day and age, few people live that type of life, but, as President Theodore Roosevelt said, "The test of our worth is the value of our service."

I would like to thank Jim for his service, his dedication, and, above all else, for his friendship. He is an inspiration and a great American.●

CHAPLAIN TONY FIRMAN RETIRES FROM FLANDREAU INDIAN SCHOOL

● Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize and honor Chaplain Tony Firman on the occasion of his retirement as Chaplain at the Flandreau Indian School in Flandreau, SD.

Chaplain Firman has completed 35 years as Chaplain at Flandreau Indian School. After receiving his training at Blue Cloud Abbey in Marvin, South Dakota, Tony served at Flandreau Indian School as Student Coordinator of Religious Activities, a boys counselor, and as a religious liaison between the students, staff and administration, area churches and the Flandreau community.

He was selected as Flandreau Indian School Chaplain by representatives from the Association of Christian Churches, which is made up of representatives from each of the following denominations: United Presbyterian Church, United Church of Christ, United Methodist Church, Lutheran